**THE END IN FRIEND**

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Prologue

(*Opening shot: fade in to a hallway within the School of Friendship. As a school bell rings to mark the end of a class period, one door opens in a magical hold and Rarity trots out of her classroom, closing it behind herself. She is wearing a short-sleeved pink sundress trimmed in white, light yellow shoes on all four hooves, and a pair of sunglasses. Her mane is tied in a ponytail and held back with a light yellow kerchief marked by her three blue gems. The camera follows her down the hallway and past a staircase on whose landing Starlight Glimmer is talking with a couple of students; the pinkish-violet unicorn glances up just in time to see the white one pass.*)

**Starlight:** Oh! (*Excusing herself, she hurries down the stairs.*) Rarity!

(*Who stops and levitates her shades to rest above her forehead in time for Starlight to catch up.*)

**Starlight:** Just the pony I’m looking for. Can you come to Twilight’s class with me? I-It won’t take long.

**Rarity:** Oh, I’d love to help, but I have to meet Rainbow Dash for our day of fun together.

**Starlight:** (*touching her shoulder*) Twilight wants to use you as an example for the students.

**Rarity:** Ooh!

(*Wipe to the closed doors of Twilight Sparkle’s lecture hall, seen from inside. These open under Rarity’s control to frame her and Starlight on the other side; she has disposed of her sunglasses, pushed the kerchief down around her neck, and untied her mane.*)

**Rarity:** (*singsong*) Your example is here! (*Giggle, then a surprised look.*) Oh!

(*The camera shifts to just behind her shoulder, revealing the slightly confused students staring up at her from their seats and the cause of her puzzlement. Down on the stage, Twilight stands alongside Rainbow Dash, the pegasus wearing a blue athletic jersey trimmed in a lighter shade and the most perplexed expression of the bunch. There follows a long, uncomfortable silence, during which the camera cuts to the stage and Starlight joins the pair on it.*)

**Rainbow:** (*to Twilight*) I-I thought I was the example.

**Twilight:** (*touching her wing*) You both are. (*Now all four are onstage; she places herself between Rainbow and Rarity.*) Because together you perfectly demonstrate my lesson on compromise and friendship. (*addressing the class; they take notes*) Rainbow Dash and Rarity have very different interests that keep them busy. But being friends is so important to them, they always manage to make time for each other.

**Rarity:** (*laughing, stepping forward*) Our day of fun was hard-planned, what with Rainbow Dash’s extremely time-consuming and erratically scheduled Wonderbolts practice.

**Rainbow:** (*stepping up*) And Rarity’s weird fashion seasons. (*An odd look from the corner of Rarity’s eye.*) She’s working on her winter collection, and it’s not even summer yet. (*Both grin for their audience.*)

**Twilight:** But you still found time to be together, and that’s what counts. See, class? These ponies are models of true friendship in action.

(*Pencils race across paper, held in mouth and magic and claw and talon, as the camera cuts to the doors and Twilight ushers Rainbow and Rarity up to them.*)

**Twilight:** Thanks for stopping by. Enjoy your day of fun.

**Silverstream:** (*from o.s., raising talons into view*) Oh! Ooooh!

(*The two guests pause and turn back toward the young hippogriff; cut to her.*)

**Silverstream:** What amazing stuff are you gonna do together? (*Cut to them.*)

**Rainbow, Rarity:** (*Rainbow holding up a kickball*) Obstacle races!/Shoe shopping!…Buckball!/Dress shopping!…Flight goggle shopping!/Fabric dyeing! (*Incensed glances between the pair.*)

**Rainbow:** Oh, come on! I even said “shopping” that time!

**Rarity:** (*smiling*) Perfect! We’ll go shopping first.

**Rainbow:** (*shoving ball toward her*) But—I brought stuff for buckball g—

**Smolder:** (*from o.s.*) Are we supposed to be learning something here? (*Cut to her and a rather bemused Ocellus and Yona.*) ’Cause this doesn’t sound like compromising at all. (*Yona nods; pan to Gallus on the next line.*)

**Gallus:** Yeah, you guys have nothing in common. How can you be friends?

(*All three mares at the doors wince at his bluntness. Zoom in slowly on Rainbow/Rarity, who manage a pair of very unconvincing laughs, and fade to black.*)

OPENING THEME

Act One

(*Opening shot: fade in to the two mares, scratching nervously at various spots around their heads as their forced grins crumble away. Zoom out slightly as Twilight zips up. Rainbow has now put away her ball.*)

**Twilight:** Even though Rainbow Dash and Rarity enjoy doing different things, there are plenty of reasons why they’re friends.

**Yona:** Uh…like what? (*Twilight leads them down to floor level, Rainbow hovering.*)

**Rainbow:** (*scoffing*) We’ve always been friends.

**Ocellus:** Always? (*Rainbow lands.*)

**Rainbow:** Well, no, not always, but for, like, a super-long time.

**Rarity:** *And* we know all the same ponies.

**Smolder:** Um…is that it?

(*Both scramble briefly for words in their minds before Rainbow speaks up.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering*) There was that time, during the Cloudsdale Best Young Flyer Competition, when I totally saved Rarity’s life.

**Rarity:** Uh, yes! And I once proved Rainbow Dash’s innocence to her beloved Wonderbolts when she was being framed for a mysterious incident.

(*Referring to “Sonic Rainboom” and “Rarity Investigates!”, respectively.*)

**Sandbar:** Cool! What else?

(*All young eyes turn expectantly toward the pair, who can only offer up weak chuckles as they rack their brains for a moment that seems to last days. Starlight breaks in by galloping to stands in front of them and Twilight.*)

**Starlight:** Uh, look. It may seem like Rarity and Rainbow Dash don’t have that much in common when you try to put it into words, but sometimes friendships can’t be explained. You just have to see them in action to understand.

**Twilight:** Actually, that’s a great idea!

(*Her big grin throws real unease into Rainbow and Rarity. Dissolve to a slow pan across the class, now occupying a bank of outdoor bleacher seats, and stop on Twilight out front with a notebook and pencil in her aura.*)

**Twilight:** (*addressing herself o.s.*) Just go about your day of fun as you normally would.

(*Longer shot: the students’ seats are at the perimeter of the School’s buckball field, Twilight sits on a stool, and Rainbow and Rarity stand on opposite sides of the midfield line. The fashionable unicorn has changed into a blue jersey to match Rainbow’s.*)

**Twilight:** You won’t even know we’re here!

**Rainbow:** (*hovering, singsong, calling o.s.*) Game on!

(*She zooms away as Rainbow plods toward her own half with much less enthusiasm. A still-longer shot sets the stage fully; it is daytime, the third member of their team is Braeburn, and their opponents are in red. A referee stallion in a black/white/striped shirt now stands at midfield, whistle around neck and kickball on one raised hoof, and Braeburn and his opposite number stand ready for the buck-off. The ball is thrown down to bounce off the dirt; the Red earth pony gets hooves to it first, but Rainbow snatches it just short of their unicorn-levitated goal basket. Tossing it up, she bounces it off her head and turns a midair somersault to kick it down the field. The Red pegasus dives for it but crashes down with a big bunch of nothing, and it sails cleanly out of bounds past Rarity—who, instead of maneuvering the Blue basket, has upturned it on the grass for use as a desk while she draws in her sketchbook. Rainbow’s smugness turns to irritation in nothing flat.*)

**Rainbow:** Rarity! You were supposed to be holding your bucket!

**Rarity:** Hmm? Oh! Sorry, darling. (*turning to her, tugging at jersey*) Wearing this drab jersey gave me an idea for a buckball-inspired line of ath-leisure wear that would allow for maximum flexibility *and* style.

(*She shows off her drawing during this line—a unicorn mare in a close-fitting, long-sleeved jersey and striped leggings. The cuffs, belt, and neckline are set with small gems that match the model’s earrings, the mane is held back with a headband, and the tail is gathered into a tightly braided bun. A flick at one curl accompanies her last words.*)

**Rarity:** Uh, but I’m ready now. (*Innocent blink.*)

**Rainbow:** Good, ’cause this time I’m gonna try something new and super-intense!

(*She returns to her starting position as the referee carries the ball to midfield. Another bounce and buck-off; this time, Braeburn gets the kick and the Red pegasus heads it away. Rarity has gone right back to her designing, hunkered down on her belly and floating the basket upright so that is barely clears the ground. Gaining a bit of altitude, Rainbow flies a tight vertical circle to generate a miniature Sonic Rainboom, which sends the ball down the field in a blaze of yellow fire and bright red rubber. The Red pegasus hits the deck to avoid having her head taken off, but just as before, Rarity pays absolutely no mind to the fastball streaking overhead. And, just as before, the daredevil player blows her cool at the flub.*)

**Rainbow:** Rarity! (*flying down to her*) Are you even paying attention?

**Rarity:** (*looking up*) What? Oh! I mean, of course! (*shifting goal slightly*) Uh, I held my bucket and everything.

**Rainbow:** But you have to *catch the ball!*

(*The white unicorn, now standing up, sets the basket down and tucks book and pencil away.*)

**Rarity:** Really? Well, that sounds dangerous.

(*Rainbow turns around and pulls a hoof down her face with a grimace of supreme exasperation.*)

**Rainbow:** (*to herself*) Oh, forget it! She’s never gonna understand the point of this game. (*She addresses Braeburn, the Red team, and their coach at normal volume.*) Buckball time is over! (*All head off the field.*)

**Rarity:** (*bringing up the rear, huffing with impatience*) Finally!

(*Twilight grimaces to herself at the game’s early end.*)

**Twilight:** (*to students, forcing a smile*) Uh…see? They did something Rainbow Dash likes, so now it’s time for something Rarity likes. Compromise!

(*Wipe to an extreme close-up of Rarity’s hooves reflected in a mirror. All four are covered by short magenta cowboy boots that shed bits of glitter every time she moves. On the start of the next line, zoom out to frame her in front of the glass, jersey gone and a white scarf patterned with pink diamonds tied around her neck.*)

**Rarity:** Hmm…I’m genuinely not sure.

(*Cut to Rainbow; one leg is thrust toward her, poking the tip of her nose.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Are they too in-style?

**Rainbow:** (*pushing it away*) Uh, isn’t that what you want them to be?

(*Longer shot; they are in a showroom whose walls are lined with shelves. Boxes are arrayed on these, some spilling out to the floor or stacked up on the carpet.*)

**Rarity:** Well, yes, yes, but they should be ahead of the curve. If they’re in fashion right now, then they’re practically already out.

**Rainbow:** That doesn’t make any sense.

(*The fashionista strolls the showroom, casting an eye over a display of high-heeled shoes, and stops to levitate a particular one.*)

**Rarity:** Hmm…perhaps I should get the stilettos instead. (*shifting it toward Rainbow*) What do you think? (*The blue flyer bats it away with a scoff.*)

**Rainbow:** Unless you like tripping with every step, heels on a horse are pretty useless.

(*Rarity expresses her disdain for this opinion by blowing out a breath forcefully enough to flap her lips against her teeth, while the students gather to watch from the far end of the room.*)

**Rarity:** *Au contraire*. They are perfect in a multitude of situations. Formal functions, afternoon teas, evening teas, high tea, tea by the sea, royal tea… (*Some of the shiny flecks are now adhering to Rainbow’s hooves.*)

**Rainbow:** Can they clean up glitter? (*jittering in place*) Ewww…it’s on my hooves!

(*She tries to shake it off with only limited success as Rarity rolls her eyes disgustedly, and ends by popping up into a hover. The pupils have started taking notes.*)

**Rainbow:** Are we done yet?

(*When the answer comes in the form of her counterpart turning back to the shoe display, she claps hooves to cheeks and expresses her displeasure with a loud groan. The gesture leaves glitter on both cheeks as she plunks her rump on a bench by a window.*)

**Rainbow:** This is *soooo* boring! (*Twilight, among the students, has stashed her notebook and pencil.*)

**Twilight:** (*to students*) Rainbow Dash and Rarity are just, uh…showcasing an aspect of friendship called banter— (*Quotation marks with hooves on this last word.*) —the playful and friendly exchange of remarks. (*Forced chuckle.*) It’s all in good fun.

(*Pencils begin to move across pages after a moment’s puzzled pause, and Twilight nibbles her lower lip with a measure of unease. Wipe to Rainbow and Rarity walking through a cavern whose walls and floor are liberally studded with large glowing jewels. Both wear hard hats with headlamps; Rarity’s is outfitted with a large magenta bow and her three blue gems, and she is pulling a cart, and Rainbow’s hooves and face are clean of glitter. All lines spoken in this chamber echo slightly.*)

**Rarity:** (*gasping softly*) Oh, I cannot wait! Collecting gemstones is my favorite! (*Stop.*)

**Rainbow:** (*sighing*) Finally, something we can agree on—treasure hunting!

(*They trade a laugh and a high five, then move farther in as Twilight and the students peek after them from somewhere up the way.*)

**Twilight:** See, everycreature? That didn’t take long. Now they’re having a great time together. (*Notebooks and pencils are put to work.*)

**Rarity:** (*levitating a gem off a wall*) Ooh, *magnifique*! (*adding it to cart*) This will be perfect for the emerald-encrusted romper I’ve been working on. (*Giggle; Rainbow flies over to her.*)

**Rainbow:** Cool! Now what would be even cooler is if we could find a treasure chamber or something! (*She zooms to a wall.*) Now if I were a secret door, where would I be?

(*A few exploratory taps against various patches of stone send down a shower of fragments, some of which bounce off Rarity’s hard hat and disrupt her telekinetic hold on a stone when the camera cuts to her. She has unhitched herself from the cart.*)

**Rarity:** (*sighing*) Rainbow Dash, could you *please* refrain from all of that racket? It’s muddying my concentration.

(*Rainbow’s back-and-forth darting brings her to a gem-tipped horizontal projection, which prompts her to a long, excited gasp.*)

**Rainbow:** Look! A lever!

(*She pronounces the first E in “lever” as a long vowel sound, as a British speaker would. A series of hearty, grunting tugs on the formation gets her exactly nowhere.*)

**Rainbow:** It’s stuck! Come help me, Rarity!

(*The unicorn has occupied herself with inspecting a levitated stone through a jeweler’s loupe screwed into one eye socket.*)

**Rarity:** (*sighing*) Just a moment.

(*She drops it into the cart. Now Rainbow stomps on the “lever” a couple of times, then shifts her weight to try and pull it free of the wall. It finally snaps, sending her across the cavern and squarely into the loaded cart. Jewels go flying in all directions and shatter to pieces against the rocky floor, spurring Rarity into a horrified gasp. Dropping her loupe, she throws herself into a diving slide and floats a few piles of debris to rest on her upturned boot soles.*)

**Rarity:** You ruined my gems!

**Rainbow:** (*standing up, brushing herself off; hard hat gone*) Yeah, well, *you* ruined my treasure hunt! (*She plunks it back on.*)

**Rarity:** (*standing, sighing angrily*) This wasn’t about treasure! It was about finding gemstones for my winter collection! (*Rainbow gets in her face.*)

**Rainbow:** Who cares about clothes? We’re supposed to be on an adventure together!

(*The camera zooms in past their silently snarling standoff to stop on the observers.*)

**Twilight:** Uh-oh.

(*Cut to just outside the cavern entrance, Rarity storming out into the forest. The echo ends at this point.*)

**Rarity:** (*magically throwing hard hat down*) That is *it!* This day of fun is officially over! (*All others have gathered to watch.*)

**Rainbow:** (*hovering, hard hat gone*) Fine by me! (*getting in her face*) Maybe I can spend some time doing something I actually *like* now!

(*A collective gasp from the students and a cringe from Twilight.*)

**Twilight:** (*chuckling lamely, stepping forward*) Surely you don’t mean that. You’re just having a little disagreement. (*to class*) Sometimes that happens between pals, but no matter what, they can always get past the problem and stay good friends. (*Rarity and Rainbow turn away from each other.*)

**Rainbow:** I don’t think we can. (*Twilight grimaces; she wheels back to Rarity.*) You don’t care about any of the things I like! It’s always about you and your boring fashions! (*Rarity rounds on her.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, puh-lease! *You* don’t even give my interests a chance! You have absolutely no respect for the finer things! *No respect, I tell you!*

(*Cut to the dumbstruck students and instructor. Two panels slide into view from opposite sides to form a diagonally divided split screen, with Rarity on the left and Rainbow on the right.*)

**Rainbow/Rarity:** I guess/suppose we’re just not friends anymore!

(*The learners gasp in shock and go for their notebooks. Pan from them to Twilight, who recovers enough of her senses to put a weary hoof to her face, and fade to black.*)

Act Two

(*Opening shot: fade in to a close-up of Rarity lying on one end of a couch, staring up at the ceiling with her head propped on the armrest.*)

**Rarity:** (*petulantly*) And then there was the time Rainbow Dash called my Cloudsdale Couture boutique idea impractical! Imagine that! Just because I needed Twilight to perform the butterfly-wings spell on me whenever I wanted to deliver merchandise!

(*Referring to the spell Twilight cast to grant her the ability to fly in “Sonic Rainboom.” Now the camera cuts to a close-up of Rainbow, slouched against the other end of a similarly colored couch and in an equally foul mood.*)

**Rainbow:** And I told her a thousand times, “Pegasi don’t even want restrictive, heavy dresses.” (*spreading a wing*) We need to be able to fly! (*rolling eyes*) Duh!

(*Cut to each in turn.*)

**Rarity:** (*sitting up*) Not to mention the day I was wearing a really gorgeous hat, and Rainbow Dash didn’t even notice! (*Cross forelegs.*)

**Rainbow:** The Wonderbolts show was ruined! (*standing up*) Rarity’s hat was blocking everypony’s view!

(*A longer shot reveals that they are, in fact, sitting on opposite ends of the same couch. They growl at each other as the camera zooms out to frame them in Starlight’s office at the School; she stands up from her desk chair.*)

**Starlight:** ENOUGH!! (*Both fall silent.*) Guidance counseling is for talking out your problems, not telling me everything that’s ever happened in the history of Equestria!

(*She flops back into her seat with a groan and a hoof pressed to her forehead, then steps out to the feuding mares with a calmer demeanor.*)

**Starlight:** But I’ve learned sometimes talking isn’t enough. You need to put yourselves in one another’s shoes.

(*Rarity’s boots suddenly become a subject of great interest to both of her “patients,” only one of whom shows admiration.*)

**Rainbow:** (*emphatically, pointing at them*) No way am I wearing those.

**Starlight:** (*groaning*) What I’m saying is, we need a way to help you two reconnect. (*trotting to office doors*) Follow me.

(*Her magic pulls them open so she can exit. Rainbow makes to follow, but Rarity is faster on the draw, delaying the blue mare with a burst of telekinesis long enough to let the white one leave first. Cut to a close-up of the library’s closed doors, seen from within; these open thanks to Starlight’s magic to frame the three on the other side, and the camera zooms out to frame the entire area.*)

**Rainbow:** The library? And this helps us how?

**Starlight:** (*leading them in*) You both love books. (*floating two from a shelf*) Rainbow Dash never stops talking about Daring Do adventures, and you’re a huge fan of Shadow Spade mysteries.

(*She faces both covers to the camera during this line, giving a good view of the intrepid pegasus on one and a trenchcoat/fedora-clad mare and her shadow on the other. The second half of her second sentence is directed at Rarity, who first expressed her enjoyment of the detective character in “Rarity Investigates!”*)

**Rarity:** Your point? (*Rainbow touches down from her hover.*)

**Starlight:** The perfect way for you two to reconnect as friends— (*shifting each mare’s book to the other*) —is to read each other’s favorite book. (*Distrustful sidewise glances.*) I’ll read them too. Then we’ll all discuss afterward. I-It’ll be a “Good Friends” book club. Okay?

(*The suspicious eyes rivet themselves on her now.*)

**Starlight:** (*coaxingly*) I’ll bring snacks.

**Rainbow:** Ugh, fine!

**Rarity:** (*very snippy*) If you insist.

(*These two end facing away from each other with noses in the air. Starlight grins hopefully in close-up, the background behind her dissolving to a stretch of Ponyville proper.*)

**Starlight:** Great! We’re all here.

(*Longer shot: she, Rainbow, and Rarity are seated at a table outside the Ponyville Café, and the former friends have their backs turned to each other and their books on the table.*)

**Starlight:** To start, why don’t you two share one thing you liked about each other’s books?

(*The wordless stalemate continues for some moments, the hopeful blue eyes flicking from one side to the other.*)

**Starlight:** Okay. I’ll go first.

(*Her field lifts the Daring Do novel she gave to Rarity and flips to a particular page.*)

**Starlight:** Uh, I really enjoyed the part in *Daring Do and the Razor of Dreams* when Daring used a vicious cragodile as a raft and then—

**Rarity:** (*snickering disdainfully*) Please.

**Rainbow:** (*needled*) Uh, what’s so funny?

**Rarity:** (*chuckling*) Oh, sorry. It’s just that I find those action sequences so ridiculously over-the-top.

**Rainbow:** But they’re real! You even met Daring Do!

(*Recall that she and the rest of the gang did exactly that in “Daring Don’t.”*)

**Rarity:** Yes, but the books’ descriptions just drag on. And what about all those silly, unpronounceable names? Dr. Whosie-Whatsit-Cabayeron.

**Rainbow:** (*grabbing book, pointing out a passage*) Ca-bal-*ler*-on! Just like it looks! (*setting it down*) How hard is that? (*She snarls quietly.*)

**Starlight:** (*hastily, levitating named items*) Uh, tea, anypony? Cucumber sandwich? (*Weak laugh; she puts them down.*) Or we could go over some nice friendly talking points.

**Rainbow:** (*laughing scornfully*) Seriously? (*holding up the Shadow Spade book*) Don’t even get me started on those clothing descriptions in Shadow Spade! (*tossing it aside*) What a yawn-fest!

**Rarity:** (*sputtering indignantly*) What? The outfit descriptions are an integral part of the plot of *The Cult in Crimson: A Shadow Spade Mystery.*

(*Her assertion earns an extended yawn from the pegasus, which she counters in turn by glaring daggers from narrowed blue eyes.*)

**Rarity:** (*levitating book, showing a picture of a stallion*) You see, if you didn’t know that Sir Fluffingsworth von Radishfield wears only silk double-breasted waistcoats— (*closing it*) —you’d never deduce that he, in fact, was the culprit!

**Rainbow:** (*puzzled*) W-Wait. He was?

(*The novel hits the ground in time with Rarity’s stunned gasp.*)

**Rarity:** *You didn’t even read it!*

**Starlight:** (*to herself, small voice*) I can see I’m gonna need reinforcements.

(*And with that, she teleports away from the budding brouhaha, just in time not to see Rainbow hover out of her seat and get in Rarity’s face.*)

**Rainbow:** Not my fault it’s so boring it put me to sleep! (*Rarity shoves her back.*)

**Rarity:** If you can’t be bothered to read the thing I like, that just further illustrates the point that we have nothing in common anymore!

(*Shocked gasps from the ponies at all the other tables.*)

**Rainbow:** At least we agree on that! From now on, I’m only hanging out with ponies who get me!

(*One hoof pounds the table on the end of this, touching off a second round of gasps. Before things can get any uglier, Starlight poofs back in between them and grabs both in her field.*)

**Starlight:** Your drama can wait! Twilight needs help, now!

(*She breaks into a gallop, towing them along. Dissolve to Twilight’s office at the School, its occupant hyperventilating and whimpering as she flies madly back and forth to ransack the shelves. Starlight bursts in, followed by Rainbow and Rarity moving under their own power.*)

**Starlight:** A-Any luck?

**Twilight:** No! (*dropping several floating books*) It’s gone!

**Rainbow:** What’s gone? (*Twilight lands facing them.*)

**Twilight:** The Amulet of Aurora! (*Rarity stifles a cry of panic.*)

**Rarity:** One of the magical items you’ve been keeping for Princess Celestia?

(*Yes, as introduced in “A Matter of Principals.”*)

**Twilight:** That amulet can reverse the tides and summon tsunamis! (*Zoom in slowly.*) If it falls into the wrong hooves, Equestria will be in grave danger!

**Rainbow:** Don’t worry, Twilight. I know tons about searching for lost treasure.

**Rarity:** And if I follow the culprit’s clues, I’m certain I can find who took your amulet. (*Rainbow rolls her eyes angrily.*)

**Twilight:** (*smiling, walking past them*) Thank you. I’ll feel so much better knowing you two are looking for it, together. (*Starlight follows her toward the doors.*)

**Starlight:** While we work on a locator spell. It’s the perfect solution.

(*Headmare and counselor trot out of the office. Cut to a close-up of an open trunk in a dimly lit closet, its lid swung up and back toward the camera, as Rarity’s magic opens the doors. She floats a magnifying glass up to one eye as Rainbow watches from a distance above; cut to a close-up of the lens, panning slowly across the chest’s contents—the other five items introduced in that earlier episode.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) There appear to be no signs of damage to the surrounding artifacts— (*Zoom out to frame her.*) —suggesting the thief did not leave in a hurry.

(*A longer shot establishes this closet as being in the office. She continues her examination while Rainbow checks under a pile of documents on the desk and flips a stool. Finding nothing of note, she cruises across the room and comes in for a landing by a trail of bluish glitter.*)

**Rainbow:** (*annoyed*) Rarity, your boots are leaving sparkles all over the floor!

(*Rarity steps over and peers intently at the gleaming specks through her glass.*)

**Rarity:** Pfft! Those aren’t from *my* boots.

(*Close-up of an unconvinced Rainbow.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s., shoving a foreleg into view*) Mine are magenta— (*Rainbow bites back a grimace; cut to both again.*) —not blue. (*Shake.*) See?

(*After a moment’s scrutiny of the bit, Rainbow’s eyes pop and she pulls in a sharp gasp and flies out of the office, following a path of the blue particles.*)

**Rarity:** (*disgustedly*) I mean, really.

(*Cut to the front entrance of the School, seen from outside. The trail leads along the walkway for a short distance before curing off to one side over the perimeter lake and away over the grassy shore. Rainbow rams one door open and flies off to follow the evidence, the camera panning to follow her toward the start of a forest path. She stops here, giving Rarity time to catch up with some effort and get her breath back. The white mare has put away her glass.*)

**Rarity:** (*eyeing one boot*) Turns out these boots were not made for trotting as advertised.

(*Rainbow gets her wings in gear without a word; the unicorn voices a vexed scoff and starts into a gallop after her.*)

**Rarity:** Where are you going? (*Drop to a walk.*) We promised Twilight we’d work together! (*Rainbow touches down and faces her with a smile.*)

**Rainbow:** Don’t you see? The Amulet of Aurora is made out of azurantium!

(*The white face registers absolutely no comprehension.*)

**Rainbow:** (*needled*) Azurantium? (*briefly holding up the borrowed Daring Do book*) You know, the same metal that the Amulet of Atonement from Daring Do Book Four is made from? (*Both eye the trail.*) It always leaves sparkles wherever it goes, just like this! Remember? (*backing Rarity up a step*) It’s from the book you just read.

**Rarity:** (*laughing sheepishly, backing off farther*) That book! Yes, the one I—I just, um, uh, just read! (*Rainbow, having landed, points an accusatory hoof.*)

**Rainbow:** Seriously? (*hovering again*) After giving me all that grief, you didn’t read mine either?!

**Rarity:** (*grinning stupidly*) Oopsie?

**Rainbow:** (*snarling*) As soon as we find this amulet, we are done with each other! (*She takes off, following the glitter.*)

**Rarity:** (*calling after her*) FINE BY ME!

(*The four booted hooves clump off after Rainbow as the view fades to black.*)

Act Three

(*Opening shot: fade in to a new stretch of the shiny granules as Rainbow wings into view and Rarity huffs around a bend to keep after her. A couple of claw-tipped prints are visible in the foreground. Rarity stops for a moment to magically remove one boot, shake gravel out of it, and put it back on, and notices these other tracks.*)

**Rarity:** Oh! (*calling ahead*) Rainbow Dash! Slow down! You’re flying past important clues!

(*Horn-power brings up her magnifying glass; cut to her perspective as she scans the prints.*)

**Rarity:** Look, it’s a print, but definitely not a hoof.

(*Back to her; Rainbow hovers not far away, at the shore of a fetid swamp.*)

**Rarity:** Are those claw marks?

**Rainbow:** Who cares? I found a bigger clue!

(*The azurantium particulates lead in a winding path over the surface of the sluggishly bubbling water and past one of several geysers that emit periodic bursts of noxious steam and liquid. In due time, Rarity has pulled even with Rainbow and put her lens away.*)

**Rarity:** I hope you don’t expect me to… (*Shudder.*) …wade through that?

(*Spotting a clump of cattails, the ace daredevil bites through one stem and cautiously lowers the plant into the water until her chin is grazing the surface. When she opens her mouth, it sinks without resistance.*)

**Rainbow:** (*flying back to shore*) Nah, it’s too deep. We’ll get stuck.

**Rarity:** Ooh, clever! Uh, what Daring Do book did you get that from?

**Rainbow:** Actually, I learned it at Scootaloo’s Filly Guides camp. (*They regard the noisome expanse.*)

**Rarity:** (*sighing*) At least you can fly across.

(*Which Rainbow proceeds to do, following the now-airborne trail and dodging two geyser blasts with a gasp. A third very nearly goes off in her face.*)

**Rainbow:** Whoa! (*She returns to shore.*) Nope. If one of those geysers burns off my wing feathers, I’ll be out of the Wonderbolts for weeks.

(*She begins to pace while Rarity walks o.s. The next words are underscored by the sounds of a flurry of activity and assorted pieces of vegetation being floated past behind her.*)

**Rainbow:** Huh…I *could* try and slingshot my way through, but I’d need two perfectly placed trees, some stretchy rope, and a pith helmet. (*Groan; Rarity trots back, levitates a tangle of vines, and is gone again.*) Too bad we can’t do what Daring Do did in Book Four and find a cragodile for a raft.

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) Ta-da!

(*The musing mare snaps her head around and finds that her fellow traveler has cobbled together a raft in the crude likeness of this very animal from random bits of wood and vines.*)

**Rarity:** (*bowing*) The S.S. *Cragodile* at your service! (*Rainbow flies over for a look.*)

**Rainbow:** Uh, that…is…*awesome!* (*catching herself*) Uh, I mean, i-it’s all right, I guess.

(*Both of them set to the job of pushing it toward the swamp.*)

**Rainbow:** How did you know how to do that?

**Rarity:** Mmm—we may have been friends for a super-long time— (*Rainbow smiles.*) —but you don’t know everything about me yet.

(*The ramshackle craft is pushed into the water and both board. Facing forward, Rainbow braces herself at the stern and gets her wings buzzing for propulsion, sending them off through the watery minefield to follow the shimmering trace evidence. Wipe to a patch of hazy air somewhere above ground level and tilt down to frame the pair in a long shot, having docked the raft and debarked to continue their search. A few more steps/flaps, and they find themselves with nothing left to follow—the course has simply stopped.*)

**Rarity:** (*gasping*) The glitter trail! It’s gone! (*She brings out her magnifier.*)

**Rainbow:** How are we supposed to find the Amulet of Aurora now?

(*A great rustling of bushes throws a scare into them and prompts Rarity to stow the device again with the softest of gasps. What hops out to face them is a froglike creature at least three times their height and length, with spotted yellow hide, a paler underbelly, four clawed legs, and six black eyes with red-orange whites. This beast, a bufogren, emits a burping croak as slime dribbles from a mouth filled with pointed teeth. The sight of it brings a shrill scream of pure terror from Rarity, which in turn causes it to cover its ears. Its voice is soft, slow, and gravelly.*)

**Bufogren:** Oh, ears! Why hoof-hoofs yell? Too, too loud!

**Rarity:** (*voice raised, hoof to ear*) Sorry! What did you say?

**Bufogren:** (*covering ears again*) Too, too loud. (*Rarity recoils in barely contained horror.*)

**Rainbow:** (*to Rarity*) I think it’s a bufogren! They have really sensitive ears. (*to it, whispering*) Did you happen to see anycreature with a sparkly thingie go this way?

**Bufogren:** Saw it.

(*These two words come complete with a mighty outrush of green vapor that leaves both sojourners struggling mightily to keep their last five or six meals down.*)

**Rainbow:** (*weakly*) Hold that thought!

(*Both of them swiftly clear the area, the hovering Rainbow being magically dragged along, and stop only once they are far enough out to draw great hitches of clean air into their lungs.*)

**Rainbow:** His breath smells so bad, I can’t think! But we can’t hear him from back here! (*Rarity casts a thoughtful eye toward the behemoth.*) Now what? (*It licks under one limb.*)

**Rarity:** Hmmm…

(*She trots away, having been hit by a brainstorm, and begins to sniff around the plants near the water’s edge. One patch seems to be just the thing.*)

**Rarity:** Aha!

(*Two leaves are telekinetically pulled loose and brought back.*)

**Rarity:** (*whispering*) I think I have the perfect solution. An old unicorn beauty trick. (*Her field shreds one leaf.*) That is, if *you* can somehow procure us a tiny bit of cloud?

**Rainbow:** Now that, I can do!

(*She zooms away to one of the geysers, waits for it to blow, and flies a tight rainbow-striped circle around it at ludicrous speed. The maneuver leaves a small cloud floating over the vent. By the time she shepherds it back to the shore, Rarity has used her magic to remove the pink-diamond scarf from her neck—worn since the pair’s Act One shoe-shopping trip—and knotted it into a pouch to hold the leaf shreds.*)

**Rarity:** Oh, it’s adorable!

(*It goes in with the bits; a moment later, the mixture is squeezed out through a small hole and onto the second, intact leaf to resemble a giant dab of toothpaste. Rarity continues by tying the scarf across her nose and mouth and letting her energy jam a forked twig onto the bridge of Rainbow’s nose to pinch it shut. The preparations complete, they turn back to the bufogren. Rarity’s next three lines are delivered in a nasal tone and at reduced volume.*)

**Rarity:** (*bowing*) Um, excuse me, kind sir. I have a special treat for you— (*Cut to the beast; she holds the stuff up on a hoof and continues o.s.*) —in exchange for your information.

**Bufogren:** Ooh, what’s that?

(*It is all she can do to keep from bolting when the horrid emanations wash over her.*)

**Rarity:** It is a magical unicorn delicacy called Effervescence—very “now,” very chic.

(*She yelps in fear as the great tongue lashes down and snags the offering.*)

**Bufogren:** (*wincing, covering ears*) Oh!

**Rarity:** Sorry, sorry! Enjoy.

(*Pale green foam begins to bubble copiously from the lips as it chews.*)

**Bufogren:** Mmmm….mmmm…my mouth! Mmm! Fresh and minty!

(*No green vapor issues along with these words—the improvised dentifrice seems to be working. It loudly and eagerly chomps through the mouthful, and Rarity’s field pulls her scarf down for a cautious sniff. The smile that appears on her face fills in nicely for an “all clear” signal.*)

**Rarity:** (*sighing happily*) Good!

(*Scarf goes around neck; Rainbow throws the twig off her nose.*)

**Rarity:** (*softly*) Uh, now, which way did the sparkly thing go?

**Bufogren:** (*pointing at an upward angle across swamp*) Up, up, up there.

(*The camera pans/tilts up to follow the gesture during this line, stopping on a ribbon of azarantium flecks that leads skyward.*)

**Rarity:** (*softly*) Thank you!

(*She and Rainbow back away to the edge of the swamp.*)

**Rarity:** (*normal volume*) Well, what are you waiting for? Go on. Fly up there and get that amulet.

**Rainbow:** Uh, we’re doing this together, remember?

**Rarity:** But how can w—

(*She trails off into a protracted yell and a string of terrified whimpers as the pegasus hoists her off the turf and up to a rocky ledge. The trail stops at an imposing wooden door whose carvings include the School’s crest, and the trip here leaves Rarity with a severe case of hyperventilation.*)

**Rainbow:** Sorry, but I wasn’t leaving you behind in that swamp.

**Rarity:** (*catching her breath*) Thank you.

(*She applies her power to the side of the door with the keyhole, while Rainbow tries a few strikes against the opposite edge when the camera pans to her. Neither approach yields any results.*)

**Rainbow:** Huh…maybe the key to unlocking this thing is in these inscriptions.

**Rarity:** (*stepping into view, lifting a foreleg*) Or perhaps the key is right here.

(*A bit of horn-work strips the boot off this limb and causes a stiletto-heel extension to snap out from the sole.*)

**Rarity:** I couldn’t decide between the boots and the stilettos, so I got both.

(*As a flabbergasted Rainbow watches, the heel is slotted into the keyhole and turned back and forth like a lockpick. After a bit of work, the latch clicks and the door swings inward to disclose a natural tunnel through the rock face, marked by the familiar azurantium dust.*)

**Rainbow:** High heels can do that?

**Rarity:** And you called them useless.

**Rainbow:** (*sighing, scratching back of head*) I shouldn’t have said that, or made fun of the other stuff you like to do. Some of it’s actually sorta neat.

**Rarity:** I…owe you an apology too. (*magically donning boot, with heel retracted*) Buckball may not be my thing, but it’s something you enjoy, and you’re very good at it. I never should have treated your interests like they were worth less than mine.

**Rainbow:** Soooo…does this mean we’re still friends?

**Rarity:** I would very much like that.

(*They share a reconciliatory embrace.*)

**Rarity:** Now let’s go find that amulet!

**Rainbow:** (*hovering*) Yeah!

(*She laughs as wings and hooves carry them along the passage, the camera zooming ahead of them into the sparkly darkness. Fade to black.*)

(*Snap to a close-up of a trophy case, which swings outward like a door at a push by Rainbow. Behind it is an arched stone doorway set into the wall. Rarity is quick to emerge as well; both boggle at their surroundings and step/fly out. During the next line, the camera zooms out to put them in one of the School’s hallways, its carpet exhibiting a continuation of the tell-tale glitter.*)

**Rainbow:** Wait. That tunnel leads to the…School? (*excitedly*) A secret passage! Awesome!

(*She beats wings to catch up to Rarity, but both stop short in time with the unicorn’s gasp in close-up.*)

**Rarity:** Spikey-wikey?!

(*Cut to a close-up of Spike, smiling and standing in the middle of the passage with the missing Amulet of Aurora in hand. Behind him, the legs and notebooks of some of Twilight’s students are visible. The clues to the item’s whereabouts now make sense: any portions of the trial not in direct contact with dry land had to be left by a winged fugitive, whose species was narrowed down by the clawed prints Rarity found.*)

**Rarity:** (*from o.s.*) *You* stole the Amulet of Aurora?

(*On the next line, zoom out to frame Twilight, Starlight, and the students; the chest containing the other artifacts stands open and within easy reach.*)

**Twilight:** Not exactly.

(*Her magic relieves Spike of the item and returns it to the chest.*)

**Rarity:** (*as she and Rainbow approach*) You mean this was a setup to make us get along.

**Starlight:** Sorry to interfere, but you both…

**Rainbow:** …*reeeeeally* needed it. (*She and Rarity share a laugh.*)

**Smolder:** (*flipping through notebook*) So even though you don’t like any of the same stuff, you two are friends again?

**Rarity:** (*chuckling*) Always. I think we just needed a teensy reminder. (*Cut to Rainbow.*)

**Rainbow:** Yeah. We don’t have to love the exact same things to have fun together. I mean, imagine if we did. How boring would that be? (*Pan to Rarity.*)

**Rarity:** When we give each other a chance to share the different things we enjoy, it can be surprisingly wonderful. (*Sigh.*) Too bad we wasted our day of fun.

**Rainbow:** We still have a little time left. (*She touches down.*) You want to…go hit the shops? (*as Rarity trots excitedly in place*) I could actually use your help picking out some new buckball gear.

(*Capped off by a high-spirited buck and whinny on the designer’s part.*)

**Rarity:** Do I! (*easing closer*) Buuuut…only if you help me choose some buckball fan attire, so I can cheer for my favorite player at the drop of a fabulous hat.

**Rainbow:** Uh, *yeah!* Let’s go already!

(*They trot for the front entrance, laughing and talking animatedly. After they have passed o.s., zoom in slowly on the rest of the gathering, several of whom have pencils moving.*)

**Twilight:** (*to students*) See? Good friends always work through their differences.

**Starlight:** (*giggling*) Even if it takes a little help.

(*Fade to black.*)